

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 06379 150441Z

15

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 SSO-00 PRS-01 SCS-01 OPR-01 A-01 SCA-01

INRE-00 L-01 /040 W

----- 009917

O 150318Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2724

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

JCS IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

USSAG NKP IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6379

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR, SOPN, MOPS, CB, US

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR MILITARY EVACUATION OF AMERICAN NEWSMEN
FROM PHNOM PENH

CAMBODIA-B NO. 21

REF : BANGKOK 6254 (CAMBODIA-B NO. 2) AND BANGKOK 6358
(CAMBODIA-B NO. 17)

1. PETER COLLINS OF CBS TELEPHONED AMBASSADOR DEAN AT HOME EVENING 14 APRIL FROM SAIGON OVER MILITARY LINE, WHOSE USE HE SAID AMBASSADOR MARTIN AND GENERAL SMITH HAD AUTHORIZED. IN AMBASSADOR DEAN'S ABSENCE, DCM KEELEY TOOK CALL.

2. COLLINS SAID AP HONG KONG HAD RECEIVED AN "S.O.S." OVER AP WIRE FROM PHNOM PENH FROM GROUP OF AMERICAN JOURNALISTS STILL IN PHNOM PENH REQUESTING THEIR IMMEDIATE EVACUATION BY ANY MEANS POSSIBLE, AS SITUATION IN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 06379 150441Z

CAMBODIAN CAPITAL HAD BECOME "DESPERATE". COLLINS SAID

HE HAD FLOWN OVER PHNOM PENH IN CHARTERED C-46 THAT DAY AND COULD CONFIRM THAT SITUATION WAS "DESPERATE". ASKED FOR DETAILS, COLLINS SAID AIRPORT WAS UNUSABLE, KC HAD BROKEN THROUGH DEFENSE PERIMETER, AND KAF HAD BOMBED FANK HEADQUARTERS.

3. COLLINS SAID NEWSMEN IN QUESTION, ALL "HOLED-UP" TOGETHER IN AP OFFICE IN HOTEL LE PHNOM, WERE: SYDNEY SCHANBERG OF NEW YORK TIMES AND STRINGER-FREELANCERS AL ROCKOFF, RICHARD BOYLE AND DENIS CAMERON. WITH THEM ALSO WAS SOPHON, A KHMER EMPLOYEE OF CBS. ASKED WHAT SORT OF COMMUNICATIONS GROUP HAD OTHER THAN AP WIRE, COLLINS SAID THEY HAD A PRC RADIO. COLLINS SAID HE INTENDED TO FLY OVER PHNOM PENH 15 APRIL IN SAME C-46 AND HOPED TO CONTACT GROUP FROM AIR BY RADIO.

4. COLLINS ASKED IF AMBASSADOR DEAN OR ANYONE ELSE HERE COULD SEND A HELICOPTER OR OTHER MILITARY AIRCRAFT INTO PHNOM PENH TO EXTRACT THESE AMERICAN CITIZENS. IN RESPONSE DCM KEELEY MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) WHILE WE ARE SINCERELY SYMPATHETIC WITH PLIGHT OF THESE AMCITS CAUGHT IN PHNOM PENH, IT SHOULD BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD BY ALL CONCERNED THAT ALL FOUR OF THESE NEWSMEN REFUSED TO BE EVACUATED BY OPERATION "EAGLE PULL" THE MORNING OF 12 APRIL AND REMAINED BEHIND AT THEIR OWN CHOICE.

(B) NEITHER AMBASSADOR DEAN NOR ANYONE ELSE HERE HAS ANY AUTHORITY TO SEND A MILITARY OR ANY OTHER AIRCRAFT INTO PHNOM PENH TO EXTRACT THESE PEOPLE.

(C) THE WHOLE MATTER SHOULD BE REFERRED TO WASHINGTON ASAP, PERHAPS BY COLLINS' HOME OFFICE IN NEW YORK. QUESTION OF WHETHER MOUNTING OF SUCH AN EXTRACTION OPERATION WAS ADVISABLE WOULD BE DECISION TO BE TAKEN AT HIGHEST LEVELS USG, AND DOD WOULD HAVE TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT WOULD BE FEASIBLE.

(D) AN EXTRACTION OF SORT REQUIRED WOULD BE AN EXTREMELY DANGEROUS OPERATION, WOULD REQUIRE RISKING A GREAT MANY AMERICAN LIVES TO SAVE A FEW NOW IN DANGER, SUCCESS WOULD DEPEND ON CLOSE COORDINATION BETWEEN AIRCRAFT AND PEOPLE ON GROUND, NEWSMEN DID NOT HAVE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 06379 150441Z

SECURE COMMUNICATIONS (FANK AND KC BOTH HAVE PRC RADIOS AND COULD LISTEN IN), AND NONE OF LZ'S INVOLVED IN "EAGLE PULL" PLANS WERE VERY CLOSE TO HOTEL LE PHNOM.

(E) SINCE MATTER SEEMED URGENT, COLLINS SHOULD PHONE HIS BOSS IN NEW YORK AND ASK HIM TO RAISE QUESTION IMMEDIATELY WITH APPROPRIATE PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON. IF DECISION TAKEN TO TRY TO RESCUE NEWSMEN, ORDERS TO MOUNT OPERATION WOULD HAVE TO COME THROUGH MILITARY

CHAIN OF COMMAND FROM DOD TO WHATEVER ELEMENT WAS
ORDERED TO EXECUTE IT.

5. COLLINS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR INFORMATION AND
ADVICE, SAID HE WOULD PHONE NEW YORK IMMEDIATELY.

6. ABOVE REPORT IS PROVIDED FOR BACKGROUND INFO OF
ADDRESSEES, SINCE COLLINS HAS PRESUMABLY ALREADY
INITIATED ACTION THROUGH CBS NEW YORK.
MASTERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EMERGENCY EVACUATION, MILITARY EVACUATION, JOURNALISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO06379
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750130-0566
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750447/aaaabrqs.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 BANGKOK 6254, 75 (CAMBODIA-B, 75 NAND BANGKOK 6358
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR MILITARY EVACUATION OF AMERICAN NEWSMEN FROM PHNOM PENH
TAGS: AEMR, SOPN, MOPS, CB, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006